

*Hobbies*

# Senate bill OKs changes for coin flip sides

By Roger Boye

**B**y a 96-0 vote, the U. S. Senate has approved legislation calling for—among other things—new designs on circulating coins.

The bill, which still must clear the House to become law, includes four major coinage-related sections. They would force the Treasury to do the following:

- Put fresh designs on the reverse sides of all five circulating coins, cent through half dollar. The bill recommends that the secretary of the Treasury select images that illustrate constitutional themes.

- Produce and sell to collectors three types of 1989-dated coins commemorating the bicentennial of the U.S. Congress, with profits from sales used to establish a U.S. Capitol Restoration Commission;

- Produce 1990-dated silver dollars commemorating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dwight D. Eisenhower; and

- Produce coins out of palladium—a precious silver-white metal of the platinum group—to commemorate the centennials of six western states.

The four sections initially were separate bills, but senators merged them into one piece of legislation on June 15.

Last year the House approved a different bill calling for coins to commemorate Congress' bicentennial. But House members have yet to consider the other coinage

proposals.

Some experts suggest that the provision requiring new designs on circulating coins may fail to become law during the current session of Congress because of the ongoing opposition of U.S. Rep. Frank Annunzio, (D., Ill.), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs and Coinage. He has called the idea ludicrous and a waste of tax money.

But Diane Wolf, a member of the U. S. Commission of Fine Arts and leading advocate of coin design change, predicted on June 17 that House passage of the bill is almost assured. Nearly 160 of the 435 House members are co-sponsoring the coin design proposal.

Federal workers are expected to launch the hobby's most popular annual sale this week by mailing order forms for government proof sets to collectors.

This year's version costs \$11, the same price charged by Uncle Sam since 1981. The 1988 sets include five coins (cent through half dollar) housed in a plastic holder and bearing familiar "S" mint marks.

Persons who don't receive a form but want to buy sets should send a check or money order to the United States Mint, Customer Service Center, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706. The mint normally takes several weeks to fill orders.